



Response to Intervention and High School Renewal

When high school students are significantly lagging behind their peers, schools have too often guided the student into special education services, even if they do not have a disability. (Countinho & Osborn 2004) While special education is appropriate for a small percent of students, most of them will grow with high quality, rigorous, and tiered instruction, as described in the Arizona Content Standards, Arizona RTI framework, and Arizona's Education and Career Action Plan framework. An [ECAP](#) (Education and Career Action Plan) reflects a student's current plan of coursework, career aspirations, and extended learning opportunities, in order to develop the student's individual academic and career goals. The Arizona [ECAP](#) and [AZ RTI](#) are two frameworks that require the use of data based decisions, high quality professional development, and parental involvement.

The [ECAP](#) provides an ongoing, systemic process of planning, analyzing, and evaluating information to inform important educational decisions and actions. It allows students to enter, track, and update academic goals that include identifying and planning the coursework necessary to achieve the high school graduation requirements, and pursue postsecondary education and career options; analyzing assessment results to determine progress and identify needs for intervention and advisement; and documenting academic achievement. As part of this planning process, Arizona schools are developing more targeted instructional strategies, within the general education curriculum, to better address the needs of struggling high school students. This improved Tier 1 instruction reduces the demands for intervention classes. In addition to high quality Tier 1 instruction, schools choosing to strive for greater achievement will utilize Professional Learning Communities (See page 9) and may glean from the NASSP's recent report *Breaking Ranks II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform*. (See page 10) This report focuses high school reform in the critical areas of:

- Collaborative leadership, professional learning communities, and the strategic use of data.
- Personalizing the school environment.
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

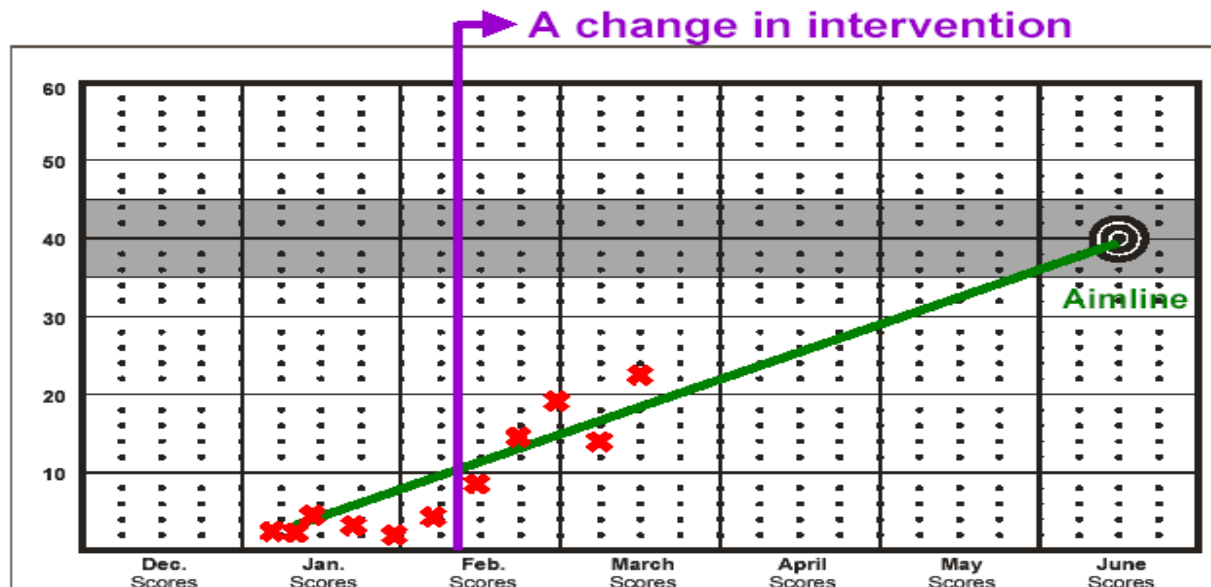
Arizona high schools incorporating an RTI framework are implementing a three part strategy for addressing the student's success. First, schools improve Tier I instruction, second, they build in intervention time, in addition to regular instruction, for struggling students and they establish systems to address student disengagement. The essential components [of Tier 1, 2 and 3 instruction \(AZ RTI\)](#) are:

- Students receive high quality, differentiated instruction in their general education setting
- The teaching and continued use of 3-5 literacy strategies in the content education setting
- Evidence based general education instruction, with a focus on using literacy within the content areas
- General education instructors and staff assume an active role in students' assessment in the curriculum
- Multiple tiers of increasingly intense, student focused interventions
- Research-validated interventions to address student difficulties
- Continuous progress monitoring of student performance, with individual student plans written at Tier 2 and Tier 3
- Progress monitoring data to determine effectiveness of interventions, and to make any modifications
- Continuous progress monitoring to pinpoint student difficulties
- Systematic assessment of the fidelity and integrity with which core instruction and specific interventions are implemented
- Use of early warning system to identify possible drop outs
- Tiered system of support for students at risk to drop out

First, students are screened to identify those that may be at risk for being unsuccessful in their growth toward college and career readiness. Screening may be a careful review of student records, including AIMS scores and previous school scores in reading and math. Or, it may be administration of a brief screening assessment. Screening is not limited to academics; students who have previous behavioral problems may also receive watchful status or have a behavior intervention plan written. In addition, an early warning system is in place to pre-screen students for dropping out. Students, who are identified, by the screening, may be given a diagnostic assessment or placed in intervention classes designed to build foundational skills and enhance the learning occurring in Tier 1 content classes. Students in intervention classes should have benchmark data, goals, and be progress monitored toward accomplishment of their

goals and closing any identified skill gaps. Generally, Tier 2 intervention is an additional 30-90 minutes of instruction. It is critical that goals are written for students before they begin the intervention class. Based upon baseline data obtained from assessments, interventions are developed, and student goals are written as growth over time. A graph can be made from the baseline to the goal over the target time. A line drawn from the base to the goal is called the aimline. Another critical component is that each student is progress monitored bi-weekly toward the goal. (See chart below) Some types of progress monitoring tools are: beginning and advanced reading fluencies (DIBELS, AIMSweb, I Steep, Scantron), mazes, STAR reading, and other assessments of student skill growth.

Progress Monitoring: The Teacher's Map



In order to build responsibility and mature thinking, students are involved in the planning and development of their ECAP, and their RTI plan for academics and behavior. Interventions are in addition to

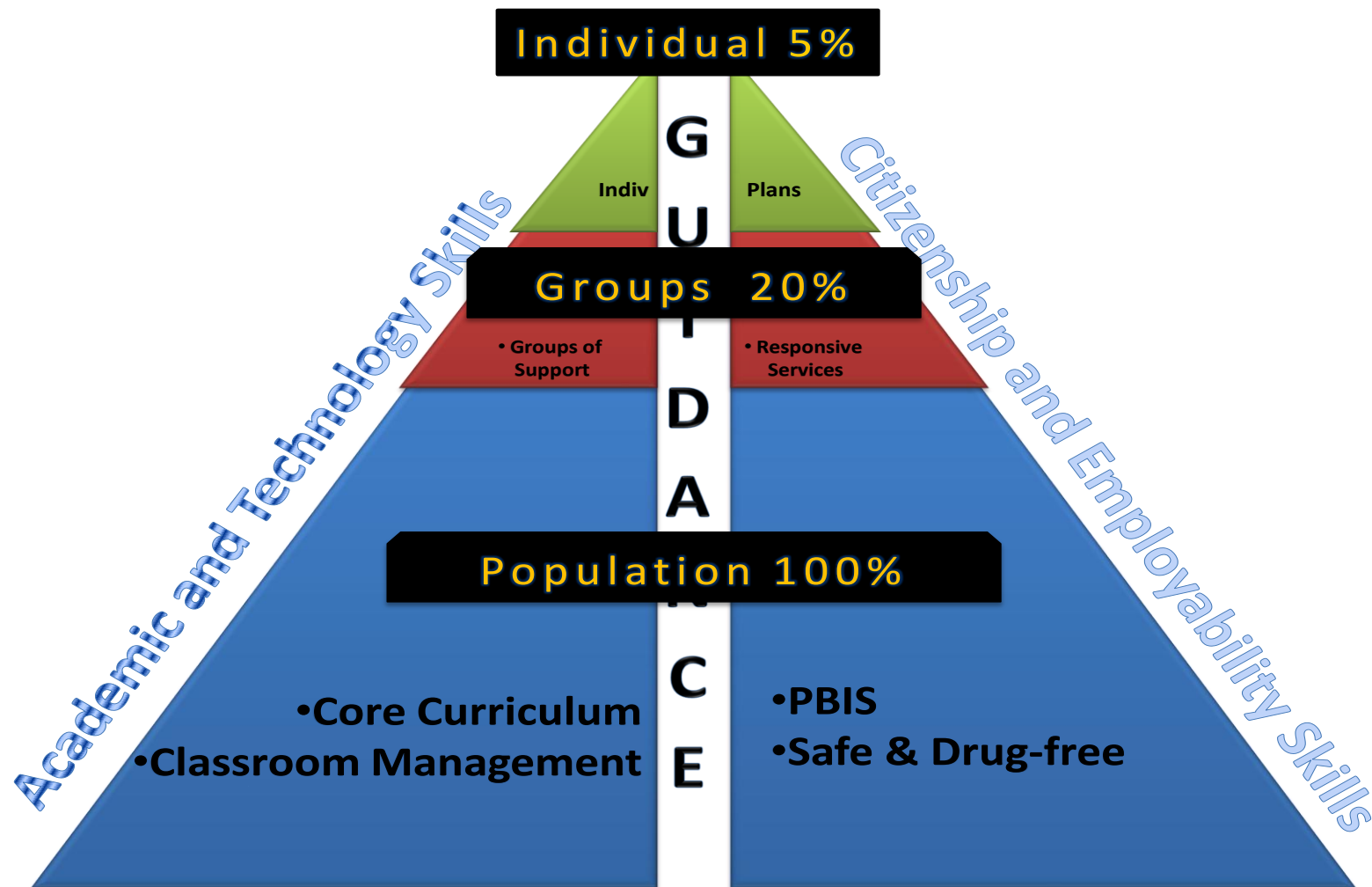
regular, high quality English and mathematics classes. Time for interventions may be found before school, after school, or in place of electives during the school day.

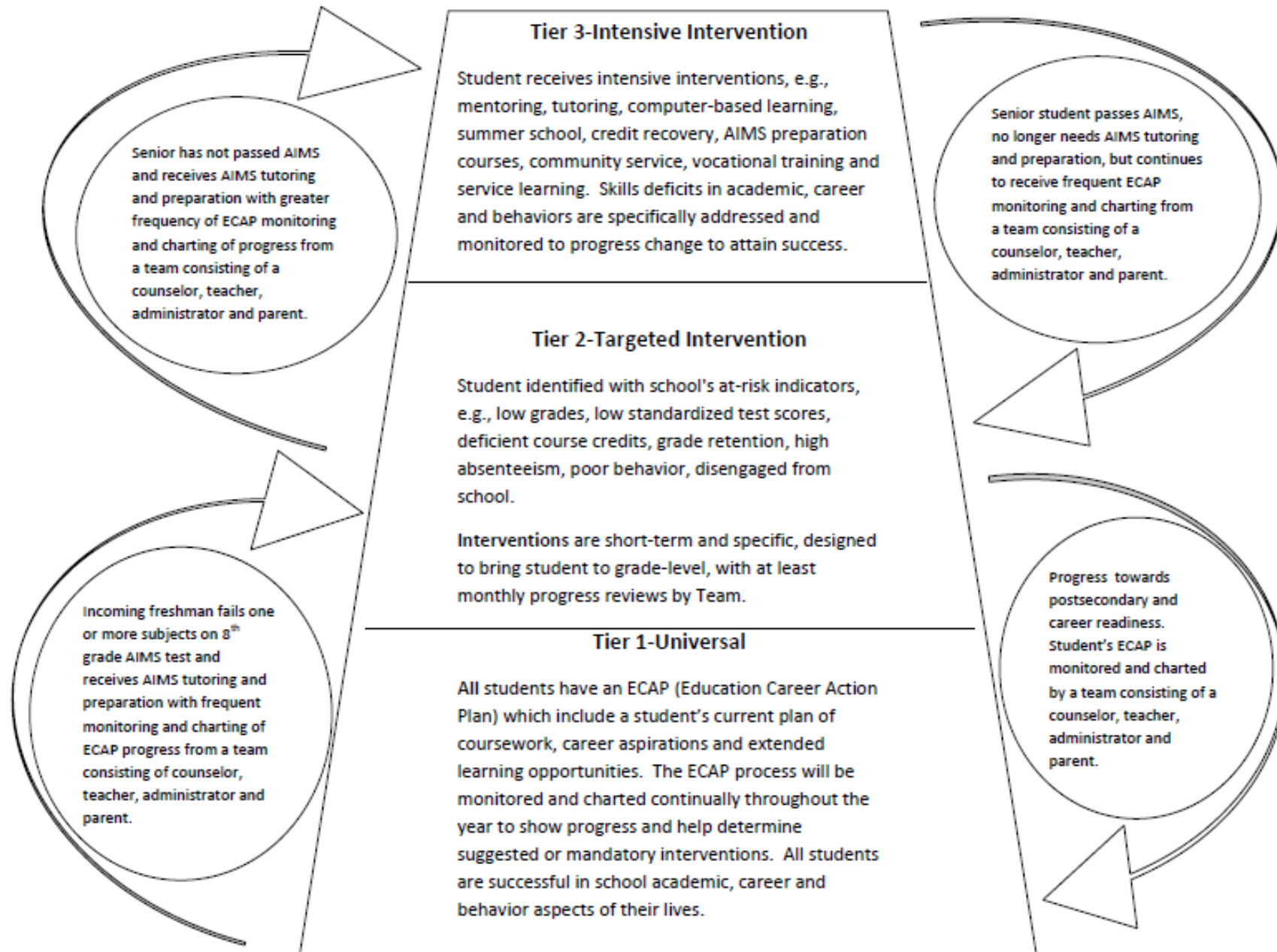
The second strategy is building content literacy support within Tier 1 classes. Content teachers are taught strategies to help below grade level students access grade level materials. Content strategies may include: vocabulary, graphic organizers, scaffolding, and assisted reading comprehension strategies. Instruction moves from lecture to more student engagement activities, using both small and large group instruction, with high student interactivity. Principals and teaching coaches will help content teachers learn the new strategies, and through interactive observations, build proficiency and mastery of the high engagement methods. Some examples of content literacy skills that may be appropriate are:

- Pre-Reading Strategy
- Vocabulary Strategies
- Graphic Organizers
- Directed Reading Activity
- Directed Reading Thinking Activity
- Post-Reading Strategy
- Cornell Note Taking Strategy
- Concept definition/mapping/graphic organizing
- Meta cognition
- Before During After
- Gradual Release model (I do, we do, you do)
- Reciprocal Teaching

The third strategy is to implement early warning systems (see [AZ Dropout Prevention](#) and [Better High Schools.org](#)) that provide early interventions for students who exhibit signs of disengaging from the school. Tier 1 strategies for all students will focus on increasing teacher-student positive relationships, creating interactive, engaging schools, and ensuring every student is successful and feels part of the school. Tier 2 strategies for disengagement may deal with attendance, grades, behavior, inter-relational

problems or structural problems such as time, place, and access to the school. Tier 3 interventions may include eliciting help from community resources and access to out of school assistance.





AZ Response To Intervention

ECAPs

(Education and Career Action Plans)

On February 25, 2008, the Arizona State Board of Education approved Education and Career Action Plans (ECAP) for all Arizona students, grades 9-12. (R7-2-302.05) “Effective for the graduation class of 2013, schools shall complete for every student in grades 9-12 an Arizona Education and Career Action Plan.” <http://www.ade.az.gov/ecap/> . An ECAP reflects a student’s current plan of coursework, career aspirations, and extended learning opportunities in order to develop the student’s individual academic and career goals. Ideally, the initial plan will be developed in middle school, and updated on a yearly basis throughout high school, in planning for postsecondary years.

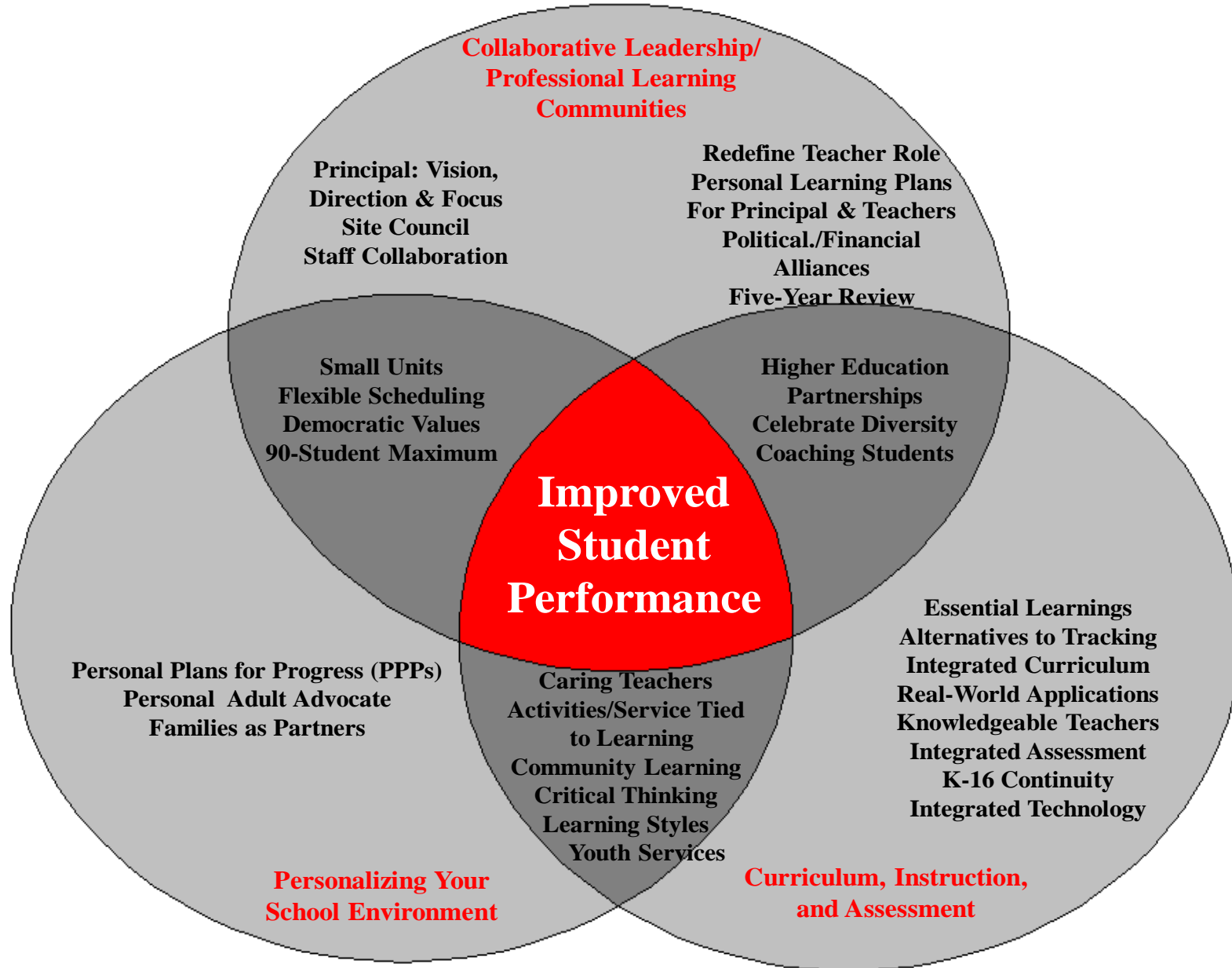
The Arizona ECAP and AZ RTI are two initiatives that require the use of data based decisions, high quality professional development, and parental involvement. The ECAP provides an ongoing, systemic process of analyzing and evaluating information to inform important educational decisions and actions. It allows students to enter, track, and update academic goals that include identifying and planning the coursework necessary to achieve the high school graduation requirements and pursue postsecondary education and career options; analyzing assessment results to determine progress and identify needs for intervention and advisement; and documenting academic achievement.

Ongoing workshops and trainings are offered to Arizona educators to ensure that the Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) process is implemented for all high school students in Arizona. Resources have been developed to help schools design their own implementation process. Those include an audit, school calendar, template examples, K-12 classroom guidance lessons, and other needed documents. These resources are posted and available on the ADE ECAP webpage (<http://www.ade.az.gov/ecap/>).

The ECAP involves parents at all levels and stages of a child’s individualized education and career plan. Research indicates that students rely heavily on parents’ advice when making postsecondary plans and decisions. Meaningful parental involvement is vital to effective, individualized, education planning. The ECAP provides a way for parents to be involved and informed in planning for their child’s education and career choices. Parent signatures are required throughout the planning process as an indication of their critical involvement.

The Assessment of the ECAP process will involve a review of student's nine week and semester grades, attendance and/or disciplinary referrals. AIMS scores will also be used as an additional snapshot of the student's academic achievement. Ongoing review of the student's ECAP will ensure that the four attributes of the ECAP, i.e., academic, career, postsecondary, and extracurricular opportunities are being documented, monitored, and updated, leading to high school graduation and postsecondary success.

The ECAP can and should be a partner in the AZ RTI process. Together, these two initiatives will help identify student strengths and weaknesses and provide careful monitoring and charting of student progress. This will contribute to personalized and appropriate interventions, evidenced by a comprehensive plan to assist the student in meeting grade-level expectations and in preparing for subsequent postsecondary education and career success.



**ALIGNING AZ LEARNS, SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARDS, AND
BREAKING RANKS II**

